

Doctors Who Only Guess at Disease.

Six New York Physicians Diagnose the Case of a
Perfectly Well Man Who Says He is Sick,
and Prescribe for Him.

Six New York physicians have diagnosed the case of a Journal reporter—a thoroughly well man who said he was sick. All have disagreed, and each gave the supposed sufferer a different prescription. These physicians were not visited with the purpose of deliberate deception, but to find out just to what extent dependence can be placed on the diagnosis of the average doctor.

Doctors proverbially disagree, but the proving of the adage this time is rather startling and naturally gives rise to the query: "Is medical diagnosis guesswork?" If not, why is it that the doctors in this instance differed so widely over the case of a man who was not sick at all, and that none of them told his patient that there was nothing the matter with him?

It was to find the exact extent of truth in the assertions regarding conflicting diagnoses that a Journal reporter called on an even half dozen doctors. Each one of the six stands well in his profession. They are known as successful physicians. But they all differed radically—entirely. In only occasional instances was the trend of questioning the same, giving indisputable evidence that the lines of thought varied widely.

The general professional knowledge of the rank and file of medical men is on the same basis. The theories taught do not differ in great degree, except as regards the different schools of medicine. But here are six physicians, all allopaths, each of whom gave a different diagnosis and prescription to the same man, who told practically the same story to all six.

SYMPTOMS OF THE PATIENT.
These are the symptoms of illness from which the doctors were told the patient suffered:

"A dull, heavy pain at the base of the brain, which was more acute when the sufferer was in a recumbent position.

"Shooting pains in the legs, seemingly located where flesh and bone met, the legs being particularly affected below the knees.

"Although possessed of an excellent appetite, the patient suffered from nausea after each meal.

"Suffered greatly from insomnia, and what little sleep was secured was rendered hideous by fearful dreams. The result was the patient felt ill and languid when he rose in the morning.

"The least exertion caused shortness of breath and a general feeling of lassitude and ill health."

These questions were asked the doctors by a man who has never been ill but once in his life, and who, in reality, suffered from none of the troubles mentioned. The diagnoses, however, were generally made after a partial examination of the patient.

The first physician seen was Dr. R. L. Pritchard, of 71 West Forty-ninth street. His first action was to feel his visitor's pulse. He waited a moment and then said:

"Ah! very low!"
Then he caused his visitor to bare his breast, and he applied a stethoscope to his chest. A regular cat-scratch followed, principally regarding the patient's habits.

DISSEMINATION HIS FAD.
Dr. Pritchard was determined to demonstrate that his caller had been leading the life of a roe and had retained physical souvenirs of Tunderloft life. In spite of the assurances that he was wrong in this conjecture, it was difficult for him to abandon the theory. He told the patient to stop drinking entirely, lead a quiet, restful life, to take the following medicine and to call in again on Friday.

"What do you think is the nature of my complaint, Doctor?" asked the patient.
"I think that you have a slight congestion at the base of the brain," was the reply. "It also appears that you have been on a tear, but as you say you have not, I suppose you are correct."

Here is Dr. Pritchard's prescription, translated into English:

Bottle of soda..... 4 drachms.
Tonic of soda..... 2 drachms.
Aromatic spirits of ammonia 15 ozs.
Add enough water to make 4 ozs.
Mix. Take 2 teaspoonfuls in every four hours a day.

Dr. J. E. M. Lordley, No. 109 West Forty-eighth street, was next visited. After he heard the list of complaints he inquired regarding the patient's habits and was told—as all the physicians were—that he drank occasionally, used tobacco moderately, but was regular in all his habits. Dr. Lordley did not advise total abstinence. He said he thought the patient had congestion of the spinal cord, gave him a prescription and told him to call again in a few days. Dr. Lordley's translated prescription is as follows:

Compound syrup of bromides..... 2 ozs.
Codine..... 2 grs.
Simple elixir..... 2 ozs.
Mix. Take 1/2 tablespoonful three times a day.

The average reader knows that aqua pura is pure water, but possibly it is not

generally known that simple elixir is sugar and water. Dr. Lordley did not feel the pulse or make an examination.

ACTED UPON THE POINT.
At No. 265 West Fifty-second street a call was made upon Dr. J. Watson Stronach, who listened to the patient's troubles. He did not feel the pulse; neither did he evidence the intense interest in the case that Dr. Pritchard showed. He asked a few questions as to when the pains were at the worst—as, in fact, did all the doctors—the patient's habits and various other questions of a similar nature. Dr. Stronach gave two prescriptions. The first was:

Chloride hydrates..... 10 grains each.
Calomel..... 2 to be taken every night.

The second of Dr. Stronach's prescriptions was as follows:

Tincture Warburg also..... 4 ozs.
One-half ounce in water each morning.

In reply to the question as to what was the nature of the complaint, Dr. Stronach said:

"Your complaint appears to be an attack of malaria."

Dr. St. Clair Smith has an office and residence at No. 8 West Thirty-eighth street, and he is professor of the theory and practice of medicine at the Flower Hospital. Dr. Smith went into the details of the suppositious case in such a thorough manner that after half an hour of questioning, the patient began to fear he would contradict himself.

The doctor asked all sorts of questions regarding the habits of his patient, when the pains first came on, at what times they were the worst, whether there was any soreness in the legs or head, whether dizziness accompanied the getting out of breath, how much the patient drank and ate, and how much tobacco he used, besides enough other questions to fill a volume.

Then Dr. Smith examined his patient's heart and lungs, and made him stand straight up, keep his eyes closed for a moment and then walk straight ahead.

At this point the patient walked as straight as a drum major, and incidentally stepped on the tail of Dr. Smith's spunk. Then the doctor gave a sort of rough massage treatment up and down his legs and along the back of his head.

"Does it hurt?" said he.
"No."
"Is there any soreness?"
"No soreness."

Finally, after many more questions regarding eating and exercise, the doctor said:

"Young man, I will give you some tablets to take. There is nothing serious the matter with you at present, except that you are troubled with uric acid. If this keeps on much longer it will probably, sooner or later, result in a severe case of gout."

CALLED IT INDIGESTION.
The next call was upon Dr. P. J. Sallcrup, at No. 20 Irving place. He did not feel the patient's pulse nor look at his tongue, but instead he began to ask questions at a lively rate. When he had finished the patient asked what the trouble appeared to be, and the reply was: "Indigestion." Dr. Sallcrup gave the following prescription:

Crystallized persin..... 20 grs.
Pulverized nut vomica..... 25 grs.
Powdered rhubarb..... 10 grs.
Bicarbonate of soda..... 20 grs.
Mix. Make into 10 capsules. One before meals.

The next and last call was upon Dr. T. M. Acken, No. 307 West Forty-third street. In this case the patient was informed he was suffering from anaemia. Dr. Acken listened to his patient's story, and asked the usual questions. It appeared from his manner that he considered the patient a species of crank, who imagined himself much more ill than he really was. The following prescription was received from Dr. Acken:

Nitrate of potash..... 1/2 dr.
Distilled water..... 8 ozs.
Mix. One teaspoonful every 4 hours.

When the patient left Dr. Acken he drew a sigh of relief and hastened to a medical friend in order to learn if the prescriptions were in accordance with the expressed views of those who wrote them.

A HARMLESS PRESCRIPTION.
"Dr. Pritchard's prescription," said the medical man, "is perfectly harmless. It is such a prescription as I would give for a bad nervous condition."

"The prescription from Dr. Lordley appears to be one that would ordinarily be given to make one sleep well."

"Just what Dr. Stronach's idea was I cannot understand, but he probably does. Anyway, it is perfectly safe."

The patient's friend could not determine the nature of Dr. Smith's tablets without an analysis, but he pronounced Dr. Sallcrup's prescription a good one for dyspepsia, and said that the one written by Dr. Acken was well calculated to stimulate the kidneys.

None of these prescriptions indicate treatment threatened brain trouble, none give evidence of belief of attack from fever. What they do show is an apparent opinion that little or nothing is the matter with the patient. Still, all the doctors gave the impression that they thought the case far from trivial. It has often been asserted that doctors never let a patient believe his illness amounts to nothing. There is, however, a marvellous contrast between the verbal opinions and the opinions which the prescriptions tell.

SMALLEST BABY IN AMERICA.

Exact size of the little boy who weighed a pound and a quarter when he was born.



HOW A STORM IS BORN.

Its Parent Is the Sun, While Rain and Snow Are Only Its Companions,
Says Farmer Dunn.

How storms are born and how they start on their journeys is something few persons besides weather sharps know anything about.

Sergeant and "Farmer" Elias B. Dunn held forth most interestingly the other afternoon on this subject. The wind was blowing at the rate of sixty to eighty miles an hour through the streets, and it seemed, with even greater force up outside the tower of the Manhattan Life building. Overhead was the bluest sort of sky, the weather was crisp and cold, and save for the sharp whistling and crackling of the wind it would have been a perfect winter's day.

"Yet," said Sergeant Dunn, "this is what is scientifically known as a storm. People generally think that a storm is the rain and snow, but they are not the storm itself, only occasional accompaniments of it. Storms are the movements of great currents of air over vast areas. The sun begins them all, its heat gathering up the moisture and whirling it through the air. Storms are the battles between great areas or banks of low and high pressures."

"Now, as to what causes or brings about the birth of a storm. Storms are generated where there is excessive heat and moisture. They are built up in various ways, at times

being formed rapidly and at times slowly. Just how they start, just what is their very beginning it is not always possible to say, for on occasion they are formed in a great circle, and again in a very small centre. But the general principle is this:

From some cause or other, the heat of the sun gathers up so much moisture that at a certain point in the air there begins to be a great bank of atmosphere that is warmer and damper than the current immediately surrounding it. The heat carrying the moisture with it ascends in a column, and as it rises and commences to spread gathers with it more and more moisture.

"These are called centres of low pressure. They are to be found in all parts of the atmosphere, near the earth, or miles above it. It is quite possible for a storm to be riging up in the clouds, and yet not be felt on the surface of the ground. So, also, there might be a serious storm near to the earth that would have no effect upon the upper currents of air. Science, it is interesting to know, has never been able to determine precisely how far the atmosphere extends above the earth. It is commonly believed among scientific men now that the atmosphere's height varies according to certain conditions. It is thought to be at least fifty miles above the earth, and it is supposed that at times it may extend two hundred miles up."

"I am talking now, understand, with regard to cyclones only. These low pressure areas of storm are in vast extent, and they have two motions—first, their progressive or outward motion from west to east at a rate of about twenty-five to thirty miles an hour, and second, the spiral centripetal movement of their moisture-laden air currents at eighty to ninety miles an hour."

"As this great bank of winds of terrific force, with its curving, circling motions, moves along, the heated air feeds on the moisture it can pick up in its flight. The more moisture it can get the greater by no means the intensity of the storm. Should its course be over dry and arid regions, little by little the violence of the winds would decrease, but if it is moving over a seaboard district, where it can suck moisture from the surface of the water, its power may grow to almost any point."

"Opposed to this are the areas of high pressure, banks of cold, dry air, which condense the moisture when they come in contact with it. That is, they will condense unless the area of low pressure is too strong and is under too favorable conditions to be done away with. This is the great battle that is constantly taking place in the air above us."

"The high pressure areas keep forcing themselves upon those of low pressure, their currents of cold, dry air having a tendency to disperse and destroy the moisture-laden clouds of the cyclone, or to drive it onward."

"Tornadoes are a different sort of storms. They are formed on the south or southeast quadrants, or portions, of an area of low pressure in the warmest part of the day, and in most instances are caused by warm, moist air from the south clashing with currents of cold, dry air. These two currents are frequently thirty or forty degrees of temperature apart. Their clashing causes an almost instant displacement of the air, and the battle between them is brief while often terrible in its effects. This conflict of the currents is the tornado. Its conflicting and battling winds may be likened to an enormous screw with its point resting upon the earth and moving along at an enormous rate of speed."

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"He is perfectly developed, isn't he?" she said.

"He is," replied the medical man.
"Then he'll live; I'll see to that. You need to the mother, and I'll serve the baby."

Mrs. Dunn had assisted on three former occasions in looking after little babies, but this time she had extraordinary conditions to face, and her task was by no means an easy one. But she rose to it, and to-day Master Jim is as healthy and perfect as any baby in the world, if he is the midwife of midwives.

He was a scant eleven inches when the doctor gave him into Mrs. Dunn's arms, and there did not seem to be enough of him to wash and dress. The trousseau that had been prepared in anticipation of his coming was found to be such a horrible mist that they couldn't even cut it down.

So they swathed him in silk and linen bandages, as they do babies of royal birth in India. A pair of socks of pink worsted, knitted by the good grandmother, were slipped on his little feet, and held by means of strings. But for this precaution they would not have remained for a minute, for they were about six sizes too large, and James, ever since his birth almost, has been gifted with a facility for kicking that would make his everlasting reputation if he were it traveler.

CAN KICK, IF HE CAN'T CRY.
He can do more things with his legs than the twinstful Dezo up at Hammerstein's, who twists and twirls and kicks and prattles at the rate of about 1,900 revolutions a minute. James is wearing his birthday socks with a blacksmith shop. The mother, who is a blacksmith's wife, and who is poor, hard-working people, the father being employed as a mill hand. But if he were the prince of all the Indies Master James could not have received more attention than has been showered upon him because of the distinction of being the really smallest baby on earth, so far as is known.

At birth Jim, for he has already become Jim to his sisters, weighed just one pound and a quarter. The average five-cent sack of salt was a monster compared to him. He was hardly bigger than a good-sized potato. And even now, though he has grown considerably, it almost requires a microscope to find him in the wilderness of white that surrounds him now.

Jim is a model baby, of course. Even when he is in the pillows he does not make himself disagreeable by yelling. There is a tradition that once upon a time, shortly after he was born, which was on July 5, last, Jim did not cry, but it occurred at night when everything was dark, and before a lamp could be lighted the supposed crying had ceased. When the light was struck it revealed Jim in his usual rule of the happiest baby in the land, smiling all over his face and his great big blue eyes beaming with good nature and joy.

The smile seems to be perpetual with this little. In fact, it is the largest part of him. There is nothing anybody that he won't smile at. His grandmother solemnly assured the reporter for the Sunday Journal that she had seen him smile at the very first sight of him, and that if the whole house was to tumble down Jim would still be found smiling in the ruins.

SUCH A HAPPY BABY!
"He's that cheerful and lovable and good-natured and happy that it's a pleasure to do for him," declared Granddame Dunn with enthusiasm. "So many people have been to see him and he has been pulled and hauled around so much that if he were like the ordinary baby he would simply cry his head off and fret himself into a delirium, but bless you! he seems to like it. Company lives him up even more than he does at other times, and he always welcomes strangers with a smile."

"His father don't like the notoriety that has come to Jim. He says it is bad luck. But I say bad luck couldn't come to such a sweet, happy little, and the fact that Jim loves to see people so much more than he does to be seen, is a good thing for him to have company. I say that a child of his age knows what's best for him himself, and if he didn't want strangers and company, and if they didn't agree with him, he'd soon let them know by crying."

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This is Really the Smallest Baby of All.

Little "Jim" at Birth Weighed Only a Pound and a Quarter and in His Carriage He is Almost Lost.

The sure-enough smallest baby in the world has been located at last. At birth he weighed one pound and a quarter. False alarms have been sounded from all parts of the country in years past, each section laying claim to possessing the only absolutely reliable Lilliputian phenomenon.

New Brunswick, N. J., now comes forward with a baby that beats all the records.

It's a boy baby, this phenomenon, and his name is James Mehie. He lives with his family at No. 239 Nelson street. His surroundings are by no means luxurious. On the first floor of the house that holds this atom is a blacksmith shop. The Mehies are poor, hard-working people, the father being employed as a mill hand. But if he were the prince of all the Indies Master James could not have received more attention than has been showered upon him because of the distinction of being the really smallest baby on earth, so far as is known.

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Sometimes they lay him away in the baby carriage, where he makes his home, without the precaution of marking the spot, and then there is considerable excitement in the household until he has been located. His Grandmother Dunn has hit upon a fine device to obviate this source of anxiety, and she is now engaged in working out her plan. The scheme consists in the making of a deep pink pillow, upon which, according to the rules, Jim is always to be laid when he is tucked away in his carriage. Then there will be no danger of losing him in the wilderness of white that surrounds him now.

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"His father don't like the notoriety that has come to Jim. He says it is bad luck. But I say bad luck couldn't come to such a sweet, happy little, and the fact that Jim loves to see people so much more than he does to be seen, is a good thing for him to have company. I say that a child of his age knows what's best for him himself, and if he didn't want strangers and company, and if they didn't agree with him, he'd soon let them know by crying."

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Jim lay perfectly still, and his eyes became more and more staring. Soon there was tremor of the lids and gradually the blue was shut out. The eyes were closed. The smallest baby in America was asleep, and seemed to enjoy this state of his existence as much as he had enjoyed his waking moments. The little hands, which had faded out for a few moments just before he dozed off, returned again almost the instant the eyes were finally closed, and then the tiny speck of light, which had been round, flat and rosy, the skin was clear and bright. The little hands, tightly clenched, lay outside the covering that grandmother spread over him.

"He awoke the first for hours at a time," said Mrs. Dunn. "At night he wakes up perhaps three or four times for milk. He doesn't cry then, but I can feel him stirring for my sleep is disturbed by his instantly. Then I just reach him the bottle and soon he is off to sleep again. Not long after he was born, which was on July 5, last, Jim did not cry, but it occurred at night when everything was dark, and before a lamp could be lighted the supposed crying had ceased. When the light was struck it revealed Jim in his usual rule of the happiest baby in the land, smiling all over his face and his great big blue eyes beaming with good nature and joy."

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